

Ballots cast in Houston using dead voters' names

By Lee Ann O'Neal | Thursday, October 9th, 2008

**Thousands on the rolls after death, creating potential for fraud**

Woodwick Street was quiet — with a few residents working in their yards and adding to post-storm brush piles at the curb — when Texas Watchdog visited on a recent Saturday to try to find Harris County voter Linda K. Hill.

"I'm sorry, but she passed on two years ago," said a mustached man wearing a Dallas Cowboys baseball cap and driving a motorized chair down the street. He was

Linda Hill's husband, Henderson Hill Jr.

Linda Kay Hill, a homemaker and Louisiana native, died Aug. 2, 2006, of a heart attack, her husband recalled, and is buried at Houston Memorial Gardens in Pearland. But Harris County voter records indicate she — or someone using her identity — cast a ballot in the November election that year. Linda Hill of Woodwick Street voted in person on Election Day, records show.

She is among the more than 4,000 people whose names are listed both on Harris County's voter rolls and also in a federal database of death records, a Texas Watchdog analysis has found.

And dozens of those people, like Linda Hill, have apparently cast ballots from beyond the grave, records since 2004 show. One expert says the number of deceased names used to cast ballots may be higher than what Texas Watchdog's analysis found.

Instances of dead voters' names being used to cast ballots were most frequent in three elections, the November 2004 general election, the November 2006 general election and the March 2008 Democratic primary, the analysis found.

Less than a month away from an election to decide the highest office in the land, some advocates worry that such errors in the voter records open the door for fraud, compromise the integrity of results and lessen voter confidence in the system.

The findings come as the group ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, has faced scrutiny in multiple states for allegedly improper voter registrations — including players for the Dallas Cowboys, not in the Lone Star State, but in Nevada. The group's Nevada offices were raided by state officials earlier this week.

That's as officials in at least six states may have improperly removed tens of thousands of voters from the rolls or prevented them from registering, the New York Times reported Wednesday.

'Counterfeiting' of votes threatens electoral process

"This is subverting the ballot," said John Fund, a Wall Street Journal columnist and author of Stealing Elections: How Voter Fraud Threatens Our Democracy. "Just like you counterfeit dollars, we take it seriously, if you counterfeit votes we should take it equally seriously, and we should punish people seriously for trying to subvert democracy."

And 4,000 voters isn't chump change, even though the figure is a tiny fraction of Harris County's 1.9

<http://www.texaswatchdog.org/2008/10/dead-voters-still-registered-in-harris-county/>

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